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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 001340

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [IR](#) [SY](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: FM MULKI CALLS OFF TRIP TO DAMASCUS, CAUTIONS
SYRIA ON IRAN

REF: A. AMMAN 01308

[1](#)B. AMMAN 01274

Classified By: CDA David Hale for Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (C) FM Mulki told Charge February 18 that he had canceled plans to travel to Damascus for bilateral discussions after confirming that Syrian PM Mohammad al-Utri, accompanied by several other Syrian ministers, had arrived in Tehran for cooperation talks with Iranian officials. Mulki said he was concerned that his presence in Damascus following Utri's visit to Iran might give the wrong impression vis-a-vis Jordan's position on Syrian and Iranian policies. Mulki said he had warned FM Shara to be very careful of Syria's relationship with Iran, particularly support for the transit of Iranian weapons and missile components through Syrian territory and airports. According to Mulki, Shara asked him if he was saying these things at the behest of the U.S., to which Mulki replied (as he did the day before -- see ref a) that he was speaking for Jordan and as a friend of Syria, who wanted to avoid a regional crisis which could affect everyone.

[1](#)2. (U) Prior to the cancellation of Mulki's trip, but after the collapse of his initiative for an Arab League gathering in Syria, local press reported on February 18 that Mulki was heading for Damascus to help defuse the "crisis" between the U.S. and Syria. Jordanian daily Al-Ghad quoted Mulki as saying that Jordan wanted Syria to be aware of the "repercussions in the region" resulting from current events. He continued, "The situation has become more pressing for consultation with our Syrian brothers on political issues, and to encourage Syria to proceed with the implementation of international resolutions." (NOTE: Mulki also called on Israel to implement international resolutions related to withdrawal of occupied Palestinian territory. END NOTE.) He was further quoted as saying that the region "needs the U.S. presence now more than ever, since it is the patron of peace, and with its presence it may be possible to reach a dialogue that spares the region a future crisis."
HALE